



BLUE LITERACY MODEL for Marine Litter revamp

to be performed at 3 coastal Taluks (Ankola, Kumta, Honnavar) to inspire the urgent repair of marine waste by coastal governing bodies.

STATE-OF-THE-ART

Local bodies have the legal duty to prevent and control pollution in their respective areas – marine pollution comprised.

However

1. The solution/action for the environmental damages we are facing on this front appears not to be on their TO DO list, bringing too much damage to the ocean and all water bodies. The concerned executives (administrators and representatives) seem to do not move in their areas, seem unaware of the waste jammed at drains, water bodies and water flows, they seem unaware also of the environmental destruction generated by restated negligence, indifference, delayed or non-existent stance.

Though such erring civic authorities should be held liable for this disaster and action should be initiated against them, is now more than ripe time to start specific remedial steps, to start a scrupulous plan to teach them to look, observe, asses, decide and act in order to prevent the damage, providing them an opportunity to reverse their delinquency through timely achieved needful interventions.

2. Violations of rules are to be imputable to public servants (both administrators and representatives), violation of all Waste rules, CRZ rules, Environment rules, Labour rules, etc. **Ignorance of the Law is no excuse**, every public servant is deemed to know the law, to respect it, to protect it, and more... to implement it.

However, there is no Environmental Officer at Rural Governance.

And what we are witnessing is exactly that there is no suitable work for environment without qualified personnel at the state-decision positions and without decentralized qualified guidance. It's absolutely expectable that the environmental disasters are growing and expanding EVERYWHERE, especially at our rural areas!

It is noticeable that we do need qualified personnel at state governing places (e.g., RDPR) but also at ground level (Taluka level).

And we observe that the occasional appointment of qualified personnel by sub-contract hiring, discharges all public servants of their responsibilities [transferred to the contractor] with remarkable public funds being wasted without any ground enhancement.

3. Here we have to recall the commonly forgotten principle grounding our work...

Knowledge is required to make decisions.

CHART FOR EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION to build knowledge on marine pollution

EXECUTIVE SETTINGS

1. Key areas – coastal ULBs & GPs of Ankola, Kumta & Honnavar Talukas for their water bodies, drains, backwaters, estuaries, mangroves, seashore, ports.

2. Key chronic ground problems

- a) Governing Authorities utterly ignoring Tourism operators/traders breach of Solid, Liquid & Plastic Waste Rules [dumping in the ocean, indulging in plastic pollution, waste burning, mismanaging sewage, encroaching drains]
- b) Inaction of Local Authorities on PWM Rules [allowing massive use of banned plastics, reaching drains and sea, there breaking into micro & nano particles]
- c) Extensive illiteracy on Plastics issue, Waste Management & Marine litter by foremost stakeholders (Police, Coast Guard, Fisheries)
- d) GPs & Fisheries Legacy waste dumped at seashore and adjacent Forest areas
- e) GPs of coastal region (with higher Tourism incidence), lack lawful S&L Waste Management System, and procedural guidance from Environmental Experts
- f) As, after plastics and other dry wastes, sewage is in most Local Bodies, the main source of pollution, partially or completely diverted by open drains to water bodies (sea, river, lakes, backwaters, etc.), the violation of Manual Scavenger Act, 2013, is fostered thru drains cleaning by *pourakarmikas*.

3. Key Challenges [for Achievement]

- a) Release of simple & basic but accurate knowledge on the current laws, issues & solutions to coastal governors (through memos, guidelines, and visual depictions)
- b) Appointment of ecologically qualified staff at Local Bodies (e.g., Environmental Officers, Health Inspectors, Environmental Officers) for imparting accurate knowledge, guidance and monitoring.
- c) Implementation of Waste laws by Local Bodies with powers to punish their violations, and unequivocal power to cancel the trade licenses of establishments not complying with Waste rules.
- d) Definition by Govt of clear-cut standards (offering guidelines, technical designs and criteria to hire workers, machineries, vehicles, and their amounts), to avoid mistakes, delays, audit objections, etc., as such:
 - Ensuing accurate identification of waste entry points to water bodies (e.g., storm water drains, sewage lines bypass, canals, etc.), standards must be fixed and technical options developed to install suitable meshes (as instructed by NGT).
 - Adjusted model designs settled, approved and offered to Local Bodies by the Govt, to expedite such work (including type of materials, estimates, rates, etc.)
 - Labour & Machineries requirement & hiring charges for desalting drains (number & daily wage of labours for 1 km of drain, hourly JCB & excavator hiring rates, estimates model, etc.)

4. Key Actors

- Mentors for the deed – ANSSIRDPR & CDA
- Ecological specialists from Environment and Fisheries
- UD, DMA, RDPR, ZP, TP, GP, Police, Coast Guard, Fisheries pivotal officers
- all ZP, TP, GP representatives
- DD of Fisheries, Fishers groups, SHG, Schools, front traders, civic groups, gujri, etc.

5. Key actions/solutions [prevention & remediation]

PREVENTION

- a) Collect detailed operational data on
 - business/traders on the coastal line
 - geo-identification of legacy waste dumped by LBs at coastal areas and adjoining forest area (mangroves included)
 - volunteer associations involved in seashore cleaning and migrant fish/coastal workers paid under MNREGA
 - officials in charge of Solid & Liquid Waste Management at District & State level
 - stretches to clean at seashore and backwaters
- b) Operationalize the disposal of fish gears ordering fishermen to remove all ALDFG handing them to Local Bodies
- c) Provide warning boards (with info on penalty) at the most vulnerable places
- d) Fix appropriate meshes at all required connecting places with regular decluttering system
- e) Call increase of patrols at sea to monitor waste disposal from fish farms and boats
- f) Direct random surveillance of the most vulnerable places by Police, Coast Guard, Local Bodies
- g) Dispense extensive training to all concerned departments on ecological development at coastal areas, educating all staff about the prevailing environmental rules
- h) Run stakeholder educative workshops to alert locals for protection of their habitat
- i) Introduce uniform fines against defaulters based on Polluter Pays Principle by Urban & Rural departments
- j) Create Local Watch & Ward Committees inclusive of all concerned departments including Urban & Rural, Police, PCB & locals
- k) Mandatorily use a quota of the statutory & 15th Finance commission grants of coastal GPs for their eco-system conservation, with provisions to CEOs to act against GPs if funds are not used for the said purpose.
- l) Engage a Seashore Managing Team for a specified stretch with assigned tasks quarterly monitored by nodal officers, specifically to
 - identify coastal legacy waste dumpsites
 - identify spots where litter “escapes” into the marine environment
 - identify schools & colleges willing to participate in the awareness and cleaning programs
 - train youths, students, community based organizations (CBOs) and volunteer groups in driving seashore clean-ups, monitoring their sanitation

REMEDIATION

- a) exhaustive removal of legacy & fresh waste from seashore and identified areas
- b) instruct fishermen to remove all ALDFG, handing them to Local Bodies